

Ginger Hoffman
11010 Clark Rd
Davisburg MI 48350-2725

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To The Honorable Members of the
House Committee on Government Operations
P.O Box 30014
Lansing, MI 48909-7514

Re: HB 5470

This country was founded on the basis of freedom; freedom from and of religion, and the inherent rights of liberty and the pursuit of happiness (whatever those may mean to a citizen, individually). The freedom from oppressive government is integral to the freedom of the people of this country and inherent in our Constitution and Bill of Rights.

The legal prohibition of any perceived therapy or treatment (even if it only works via placebo effect) is a blatant violation of these rights, especially when that prohibition is of the use or possession of a natural plant which is easily grown and cultivated and has the potential to provide substantial benefits. Of particular interest here is one of the plant's greatest benefits: relief from various medical maladies as supported by the many, many professionals, medical and otherwise, and patients who support its use and indeed, encourage same.

Why would government feel the need to "protect" its people from marijuana and then approve pharmaceutical products with tolerable death rates? Marijuana doesn't kill people!

In a reality where "approved" cures are many times worse than the disease they purport to help, marijuana stands tall as a viable, safe, effective, all-natural, Nature provided and created alternative that should neither be "legally prohibited" for medical use nor viewed as an activity or lifestyle choice to be dictated by government. (Regulation of commerce is done through setting standards, inspecting, and things of that nature, not criminalization for consensual use of something that causes no harm to the person or property of another.)

There are many, many arguments for marijuana. It is my opinion that the only one that should matter in this venue, in the eyes of any government, is whether or not prohibition is Constitutional and in line with the Bill of Rights. To dictate whether inherently dangerous human activities of any kind, committed by consenting adults and which do not harm another's person or property, are legal or not is beyond the scope of authority granted to government in any way. Marijuana in particular is a relatively harmless

substance and in many cases quite beneficial, and it is ridiculous to “forbid your people” from utilizing and benefiting from it as they see fit.

What about dangerous sports or other human activities like attempting to fly an airplane (Wright Brothers)? If the government is so concerned about protecting its people from harming themselves in some perceived way that it feels justified in blatantly restricting personal freedom and liberty, then why are inherently dangerous sports not banned as illegal activities (e.g., race car driving, boxing, and so on)? And what about suppressing others’ opinions that differ from the current law? If I disagree with the “law” and do no harm to another’s person or property but yet disregard it, I’m still subject to heinous treatment by “authorities”, regardless of my otherwise law-abiding behavior.

Not only does the prohibition of marijuana seem to stifle the advancement of society by restricting the benefits and medicinal value of Nature, it stifles everything this country stands for – freedom: life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness as you, the individual, define it (within the confines of harming another’s person or property).

I sincerely hope the Members of this House can see the liberty-restricting nature of marijuana prohibition, the vast benefits that can come from its open and honest use and investigation, and vehemently support its medical use today, as well as the ban of all restrictions on personal liberties in the future. I can personally see no other logical Constitutionally-valid answer.

“We the People” are plenty capable of taking care of ourselves, and we were guaranteed that right by our founding fathers. To continue to restrict the life, liberty, and pursuit of happiness of the people of this state is to continue to operate a tyrannical government that dictates to its people how to live and suffocates their natural human and civil rights.

Please, be reasonable. No one is asking you to smoke marijuana by passing this bill. The people are only asking to be returned to their natural right to use a natural substance to help them feel better. Isn’t it great that Mother Nature created a plant that can actually help people? Why would government insist that Mother Nature is “wrong” and forbid its use? We should celebrate it, study it, learn about how it may further help in manufacturing, agriculture, and alternative fuels, and be grateful for its existence!

Sincerely,

Ginger K. Hoffman